UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN RE: PROCESSED EGG PRODUCTS

ANTITRUST LITIGATION

MDL No. 2002 08-md-02002

THIS DOCUMENT RELATES TO: Kraft Foods Global, Inc. et al v. United Egg

Producers, Inc. et al

No. 1:12-cv-00088 GP

NATIONAL FOOD CORPORATION'S ANSWER TO KRAFT FOODS PLAINTIFFS' FIRST AMENDED COMPLAINT, WITH AFFIRMATIVE DEFENSES

Answering plaintiffs Kraft Foods Global, Inc., The Kellogg Company, General Mills Inc., and Nestle USA, Inc.'s First Amended Complaint ("FAC") (Docket No. 624) (together with the expressly-named affiliates, collectively, the "Kraft Foods Plaintiffs"), defendant National Food Corporation ("NFC"), through its undersigned counsel of record, admits, denies, and alleges as follows:

PRELIMINARY STATEMENT

The allegations of the FAC substantially retrace the ground already covered at length in the Second Amended Consolidated Class Action Complaint of the Direct Purchasers (Docket No. 291) (hereafter, "Directs' Complaint," to which NFC has filed a 58-page Amended Answer (Dkt. 369) (hereafter, "Answer to Directs' Complaint")). These allegations also substantially retrace the ground covered by the Second Amended Complaint of the Indirect Purchasers (Dkt. 293) (hereafter, "Indirects' Complaint," to which NFC has filed an Answer (Dkt. 342) (hereafter, "Answer to Indirects' Complaint")), as well as by the various complaints of the other Direct Action Purchasers, all of which NFC has answered or is answering concurrently. NFC has made a good-faith effort to identify and respond to new matter asserted in the FAC, but it has found

little other than purported quotations from documents, or purported summaries or characterizations of documents, which documents are the best evidence of their contents.

Accordingly, NFC incorporates by reference its responses to the corresponding allegations in these other complaints, as indicated below.

ANSWER

- 1. Answering paragraph 1, NFC understands this to be a definitional paragraph that does not require response. To the extent that response may be required, NFC admits that the definitions of "shell eggs" and "egg products" may be consistent with the usage of those terms by some persons at some times, but otherwise denies the allegations for want of information.¹
- 2. Answering paragraph 2, NFC incorporates its responses below to paragraphs 18 through 65, but asserts that UEP and USEM are Capper-Volstead agricultural cooperatives and not merely "trade groups."
- 3. Answering the argumentative and conclusory allegations of paragraphs 3-10, which NFC understands to be a summary of the more specific allegations that follow, NFC incorporates by reference its responses to these more detailed allegations. To the extent that the allegations purport to quote from or characterize documents, NFC asserts that the documents themselves are the best evidence of their contents, and denies such allegations except to the extent that they accurately reflect the contents of the documents, taken as a whole, fairly read, and taken in context. In all other respects, except as stated elsewhere herein or in NFC's Answers to other Complaints, NFC denies the allegations of paragraphs 3-10 as to itself, and denies them as to other defendants for want of information.

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¹ Wherever this Answer states that NFC denies an allegation "for want of information," NFC means that it lacks knowledge or information sufficient to form a belief as to the truth of the allegation. NFC uses the shorter expression for convenience only.

- 4. Answering paragraphs 11-13, NFC admits that the Kraft Foods Plaintiffs purport to bring this action as alleged in paragraph 11, admits that this action was transferred to this District pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1407, admits that this Court has jurisdiction over the subject matter, and waives any objections that NFC might have to venue in the Eastern District of Pennsylvania or to this Court's personal jurisdiction over it. Except as so admitted or waived, NFC denies the allegations of paragraphs 11-13 as to itself, and denies them as to other defendants for want of information.
- 5. Answering paragraphs 14-17, NFC denies the allegations of these paragraphs for want of information.
- 6. Answering paragraphs 18-20, NFC incorporates by reference its responses to the corresponding portions of the Directs' Complaint (*see* Answer to Directs' Complaint, especially ¶ 19), but otherwise denies the allegations of paragraphs 18-20 for want of information.
- 7. Answering paragraph 21, NFC admits the second, third sentences, and fifth sentences, and states that the first and fourth sentences are consistent with its understanding, but alleges that the records of Cal-Maine and/or AEP would be the best evidence of these matters.
- 8. Answering paragraphs 22-40, NFC incorporates by reference its responses to the corresponding portions of the Directs' Complaint (see Answer to Directs' Complaint, especially ¶¶ 12, 19-22), but otherwise denies the allegations of paragraphs 18-40 for want of information.
- 9. Answering paragraph 41, NFC admits the allegations of the first, third, and fourth sentences, states that at the time of this answer NFC owned approximately 3.8 million laying hens, but otherwise denies the allegations of the second sentence for want of information.
- 10. Answering paragraph 42, NFC asserts that it has not been a member of USEM since 2010, but otherwise admits the allegations.

- 11. Answering paragraph 43, including subparagraphs (A) through (L), NFC incorporates by references its responses to the corresponding provisions of the Directs' Complaint (*see* Answer to Directs' Complaint, especially ¶¶ 18, 77, 87, 96, 115, 130-131, 135, 141-143, 155, 164, 170-172, 217-218, 220). NFC has no independent recollection of the meetings referred to in subparagraph 43(B) and 43(G), and it therefore denies the allegations of these subparagraphs for want of information. To the extent that the allegations purport to quote from, summarize, or characterize documents, NFC asserts that the documents themselves are the best evidence of their contents, and denies such allegations except to the extent that they accurately reflect the contents of the documents, taken as a whole, fairly read, and taken in context. In all other respects, NFC denies the allegations of paragraph 43 (including subparagraphs (A) through (L)).
- 12. Answering paragraphs 44-54, NFC incorporates by reference its responses to the corresponding portions of the Directs' Complaint (*see* Answer to Directs' Complaint, ¶¶ 13-14, 22-24). In all other respects, NFC denies the allegations of paragraphs 44-54 for want of information.
- 13. Answering paragraph 55-57, NFC asserts that in its understanding, Sparboe Farms is a producer and marketer of shell eggs headquartered in Litchfield, Minnesota, that Sparboe has been a member of UEP at some times and not at other times, and that persons whom NFC understood to be affiliated with Sparboe Farms may have attended UEP meetings and may have held various positions within UEP. To the extent that the allegations purport to summarize or characterize a document, NFC asserts that the document is the best evidence of its contents, and denies such allegations except to the extent that they accurately reflect the contents of the document taken as a whole, fairly read, and taken in context. In all other respects, NFC denies the allegations in paragraphs 55-57 for want of information.

- 14. Answering paragraphs 58-60, NFC incorporates by reference its response to the corresponding provisions of the Directs' Complaint (*see* Answer to Directs' Complaint, especially ¶¶ 25, 67-72, 76, 87, 103). In all other respects, NFC denies the allegations of paragraphs 58-60 for want of information.
- 15. Answering paragraphs 61-63, NFC incorporates by reference its responses to the corresponding provisions of the Directs' Complaint (*see* Answer to Directs' Complaint, especially ¶¶ 27, 74-76, 155). To the extent that the allegations purport to quote from, summarize, or characterize a document, NFC asserts that the document itself is the best evidence of its contents, and denies such allegations except to the extent that they accurately reflect the contents of the document taken as a whole, fairly read, and taken in context. In all other respects, NFC denies the allegations of paragraphs 61-63 for want of information.
- 16. Answering paragraphs 64-65, NFC incorporates by reference its response to the corresponding provisions of the Directs' Complaint (*see* Answer to Directs' Complaint, especially ¶¶ 26, 73, 76). To the extent that the allegations purport to summarize or characterize documents, NFC asserts that the documents are the best evidence of their contents and denies the allegations regarding such contents except to the extent that they accurately reflect the contents of the documents taken as a whole, fairly read, and taken in context. In all other respects, NFC denies the allegations of paragraphs 64-65 for want of information.
- 17. Answering paragraphs 66-75, NFC incorporates by references its responses to the corresponding provisions of the Directs' Complaint (see Answer to Directs' Complaint, ¶¶ 13, 20). Except as so asserted, NFC denies the allegations of paragraphs 66-75 for want of information.

- 18. Answering paragraph 76, NFC admits the second and third sentences, and asserts that the first and fourth sentences are consistent with its understanding, but alleges that the records of Hillandale, LLC and/or AEP would be the best evidence of these matters.
- 19. Answering paragraph 77-78, NFC asserts that in its understanding Wabash Valley is an egg producer with an address in Dubois, Indiana, and that persons whom NFC understands to be affiliated with Wabash Valley may have attended USEM meetings and may have held various positions with USEM. Except as so asserted, NFC denies the allegations of paragraphs 77-78 for want of information.
- 20. Answering paragraph 79, NFC incorporates by reference its response to the corresponding provisions of the Directs' Complaint (*see* Answer to Directs' Complaint, especially ¶¶ 28-29). In all other respects, NFC denies the allegations of paragraph 79 for want of information.
- 21. Answering paragraphs 80-85, NFC incorporates by references its responses to the corresponding provisions of the Directs' Complaint (*see* Answer to Directs' Complaint, especially ¶¶ 40-42). In all other respects, NFC denies the allegations of paragraphs 80-85 for want of information.
- 22. Answering paragraphs 86-92, NFC incorporates by reference its responses to the corresponding provisions of the Directs' Complaint (*see* Answer to Directs' Complaint, especially ¶¶ 30-39, 47-48), and of the Indirects' Complaint (*see* Answer to Indirects' Complaint, especially ¶ 15). In all other respects, NFC denies the allegations of paragraphs 86-92 for want of information.
- 23. Answering paragraph 93, NFC alleges that some of its customers in the retail and foodservice channels purchase shell eggs from it at prices based in part on one or more of the

various Urner Barry wholesale quotations for eggs, that in its understanding some customers in these channels purchase shell eggs from other sellers at prices that are similarly based, and that in its understanding prices to some large buyers of shell eggs and/or egg products purchase are determined by a cost-based formula. Except as so alleged, NFC denies the allegations of paragraph 93 for want of information.

- 24. Answering paragraph 94, NFC does not fully understand the first sentence, but in response it states that in its understanding supply and demand factors for shell eggs and for egg products differ from one another. NFC admits that shell eggs are a key input for egg products, and that feed costs are a significant cost component for both. NFC admits the third sentence of paragraph 94. Except as stated or admitted, NFC denies the allegations of paragraph 94.
- 25. Answering paragraph 95, NFC responds that in its understanding although there may be some degree of correlation between prices for some shell eggs and prices for some egg products during some periods in some locations, there may be no such correlation at other periods and/or in other locations. NFC admits that it sells both shell eggs and certain egg products, and that in its understanding many other producers do so as well. NFC denies the third and fourth sentences of paragraph 95 as to itself, and denies these sentences as to others for want of information. Answering the fifth and sixth sentences, NFC states that in its understanding, the so-called "100% Rule" applies to 100% of a producer's flocks, regardless of whether eggs from those flocks are broken or sold as shell eggs. In all other respects, NFC denies the allegations of paragraph 95 for want of information.
- 26. Answering paragraph 96, NFC alleges that some shell eggs and processed eggs are commodity products, fungible and substitutable to some degree and for some purposes and not for others, but alleges that there are also differences among eggs and egg products that are

important to customers in some contexts. Answering the third sentence, NFC alleges that there is and has been some degree of advertising or promotion in an effort to create brand or product identity, and therefore denies that there has been "little if any" such activity.

- 27. Answering paragraphs 97-101, NFC incorporates by references its responses to the corresponding provisions of the Directs' Complaint (*see* Answer to Directs' Complaint, especially ¶¶ 57-66), and of the Indirects' Complaint (*see* Answer to Indirects' Complaint, especially ¶ 15). In all other respects, NFC denies the allegations of paragraphs 97-101 for want of information.
- 28. Answering paragraph 102, NFC asserts that it is partially integrated vertically, in that it operates feed mills, pullet houses, and layer houses, and it engages in processing and marketing of some of its eggs and egg products, but denies that it hatches chicks or produces dried eggs. NFC denies for want of information the allegations as to other "major egg producers."
- 29. Answering paragraphs 103-107, NFC incorporates by reference its responses to the corresponding provisions of the Directs' Complaint (*see* Answer to Directs' Complaint, especially ¶¶ 37-40, 87), and of the Indirects' Complaint (*see* Answer to Indirects' Complaint, especially ¶ 15). In all other respects, NFC denies the allegations of paragraphs 102-107 for want of information.
- 30. Answering paragraph 108-114, NFC admits that it sold and shipped eggs to states other than those where the eggs were produced, admits that it purchased items from other states in connection with its production and sale of eggs and egg products, incorporates by reference its responses to the corresponding provisions of the Directs' Complaint (*see* Answer to Directs' Complaint, especially ¶¶ 258-261), denies the allegations of wrongdoing as to itself, and denies

all remaining allegations of paragraphs 108-114 for want of information, including all allegations as to other defendants.

- 31. Answering paragraphs 115-118, NFC incorporates by reference its responses to the corresponding provisions of the Directs' Complaint (*see* Answer to Directs' Complaint, especially ¶¶ 77-81). To the extent the allegations in these paragraphs purport to summarize or characterize documents, the documents are the best evidence of their contents; NFC denies such allegations except to the extent they reflect the contents of such documents, taken as a whole, fairly read, and taken in context. In all other respects, NFC denies the allegations of paragraphs 115-118 as to itself and denies them as to others for want of information.
- 32. Answering paragraphs 119-139, NFC incorporates by reference its responses to the corresponding provisions of the Directs' Complaint (*see* Answer to Directs' Complaint, especially ¶¶ 77, 86-128, 135, 143, 147, 150-154, 187-190, 200-206), and of the Indirects' Complaint (*see* Answer to Indirects' Complaint, especially ¶¶ 18-21). To the extent the allegations in these paragraphs purport to summarize or characterize documents, the documents are the best evidence of their contents; NFC denies such allegations except to the extent they reflect the contents of such documents, taken as a whole, fairly read, and taken in context. In all other respects, NFC denies the allegations of paragraphs 119-139 for want of information.
- 33. Answering paragraphs 140-145, NFC incorporates by reference its responses to the corresponding provisions of the Directs' Complaint (*see* Answer to Directs' Complaint, especially ¶¶ 49-53, 135, 155-81, 185-199), and of the Indirects' Complaint (*see* Answer to Indirects' Complaint, especially ¶ 23). To the extent the allegations in these paragraphs purport to summarize or characterize documents, the documents are the best evidence of their contents; NFC denies such allegations except to the extent they reflect the contents of such documents,

taken as a whole, fairly read, and taken in context. In all other respects, NFC denies the allegations of paragraphs 140-145 for want of information.

- 34. Answering paragraphs 146-166, NFC incorporates by reference its responses to the corresponding provisions of the Directs' Complaint (*see* Answer to Directs' Complaint, especially ¶ 77, 80-85), and of the Indirects' Complaint (*see* Answer to Indirects' Complaint, especially ¶ 22). To the extent the allegations in these paragraphs purport to summarize or characterize documents, the documents are the best evidence of their contents; NFC denies such allegations except to the extent they reflect the contents of such documents, taken as a whole, fairly read, and taken in context. In all other respects, NFC denies the allegations of paragraphs 146-166 for want of information.
- 35. Answering paragraphs 167-75, NFC incorporates by references its responses to the corresponding provisions of the Directs' Complaint (*see* Answer to Directs' Complaint, especially ¶¶ 182-99), and of the Indirects' Complaint (*see* Answer to Indirects' Complaint, especially ¶21). To the extent the allegations in these paragraphs purport to summarize or characterize documents, the documents are the best evidence of their contents; NFC denies such allegations except to the extent they reflect the contents of such documents, taken as a whole, fairly read, and taken in context. In all other respects, NFC denies the allegations of paragraphs 167-175 for want of information.
- 36. Answering paragraphs 176-179, NFC incorporates by reference its responses to the corresponding provisions of the Directs' Complaint (see Answer to Directs' Complaint, especially ¶¶ 207-244), and of the Indirects' Complaint (see Answer to Indirects' Complaint, especially ¶ 24). To the extent the allegations in these paragraphs purport to summarize or characterize documents, the documents are the best evidence of their contents; NFC denies such

allegations except to the extent they reflect the contents of such documents, taken as a whole, fairly read, and taken in context. In all other respects, NFC denies the allegations of paragraphs 176-179 for want of information.

- 37. Answering paragraphs 180-186, NFC denies that supply control programs fall outside the scope of the Capper-Volstead Act's protections. To the extent the allegations in these paragraphs purport to summarize or characterize documents, the documents are the best evidence of their contents; NFC denies such allegations except to the extent they reflect the contents of such documents, taken as a whole, fairly read, and taken in context. In all other respects, NFC denies the allegations of paragraphs 180-186 for want of information.
- 38. Answering paragraphs 187-193, NFC incorporates by reference its responses to the corresponding provisions of the Directs' Complaint (see Answer to Directs' Complaint, especially ¶ 207-244), and of the Indirects' Complaint (see Answer to Indirects' Complaint, especially ¶ 24). To the extent the allegations in these paragraphs purport to summarize or characterize documents, the documents are the best evidence of their contents; NFC denies such allegations except to the extent they reflect the contents of such documents, taken as a whole, fairly read, and taken in context. In all other respects, NFC denies the allegations of paragraphs 187-193 for want of information.
- 39. Answering paragraphs 194-197, NFC denies those allegations as to itself, and denies them for want of information as to others.
- 40. Answering paragraphs 198-210, NFC incorporates by reference its responses to the corresponding provisions of the Directs' Complaint (*see* Answer to Directs' Complaint, especially ¶¶ 248-257), and of the Indirects' Complaint (*see* Answer to Indirects' Complaint, especially ¶ 26). To the extent the allegations in these paragraphs purport to summarize or

characterize documents, the documents are the best evidence of their contents; NFC denies such allegations except to the extent they reflect the contents of such documents, taken as a whole, fairly read, and taken in context. In all other respects, NFC denies the allegations of paragraphs 198-210 for want of information.

- 41. Answering the first sentence of paragraph 211, NFC denies the allegations for want of information. Answering the second and third sentences of paragraph 211, NFC denies the allegations as to itself, and denies them as to others for want of information.
- 42. Answering paragraph 212, NFC denies the allegations as to itself, and denies them as to others for want of information.

AFFIRMATIVE DEFENSES

- 1. The challenged conduct of NFC must be judged, in whole or in part, under the Rule of Reason, and the Kraft Foods Plaintiffs have failed to state a claim under that doctrine.
- 2. To the extent that the claim of the Kraft Foods Plaintiffs rests on guidelines for reduced cage density that they themselves or persons in their distribution chain requested or insisted on, their claim is barred by the doctrine of estoppel.
- 3. To the extent that the Kraft Foods Plaintiffs seek to impose vicarious liability on NFC for the acts of Mr. Deffner or other persons affiliated with NFC while such persons were acting on behalf of UEP and/or USEM, such liability is barred by the "borrowed servant" doctrine.
- 4. The alleged acts and omissions of defendants were within the scope of the antitrust immunity provided by the Capper-Volstead Act, 7 U.S.C. § 291, in whole or in part.

- 5. The alleged acts and omissions of defendants were within the scope of the antitrust immunity provided by § 5 of the Cooperative Marketing Association Act, 7 U.S.C. § 455, in whole or in part.
- 6. The alleged acts and omissions of defendants were within the scope of the antitrust immunity provided by § 6 of the Clayton Act, 15 U.S.C. § 17, in whole or in part.
- 7. NFC did not knowingly or consciously participate in a scheme designed to achieve an unlawful objective. NFC itself is a "farmer" and a "producer" within the scope of the foregoing federal and state immunities. At all relevant times NFC believed that the other members of UEP and USEM were likewise "farmers" and "producers," and that UEP and USEM themselves qualified as cooperative organizations whose legitimate activities, including all those that are the subject of the Kraft Foods Plaintiffs' claims, are immune from state and federal antitrust laws under the various statutes cited above. If, for some technical reason, NFC was mistaken in any or all of such beliefs, it is not liable by reason of such mistake(s).
- 8. If, for some technical reason, any or all of the alleged acts and omissions of defendants were not within the scope of the foregoing immunities, any such technical defects should be disregarded as de minimis.
- 9. If, for some technical reason, any or all of the alleged acts and omissions of defendants were not within the scope of the foregoing immunities, such a situation was not reasonably foreseeable by NFC.
- 10. At all relevant times, NFC acted in good faith and with intent to comply with the law.

- 11. If, for some technical reason, any or all of the alleged acts and omissions of defendants were not within the scope of the foregoing immunities, any resulting damages should be equitably mitigated.
- 12. If, for any reason, any of the alleged acts and omissions of defendants were unlawful under the antitrust laws and were outside the scope of any immunity, any resulting damages are limited to compensation for injuries that the Kraft Foods Plaintiffs can show to have resulted from that which made defendants' conduct unlawful and to be separate from the consequences of otherwise lawful activity.
- NFC for the alleged acts and omissions of its alleged co-conspirators, and then to treble the resulting damages and add attorneys' fees and expenses, they seek a result that is so grossly excessive in comparison with the conduct, lack of culpability, and limited resources of NFC that in this case it would amount to an arbitrary deprivation of property in violation of the Due Process Clause of the Fifth Amendment of the United States Constitution.
- 14. The Kraft Foods Plaintiffs' claims are barred in whole or in part by the statute of limitations and/or the doctrine of laches.
- 15. To the extent that the Kraft Foods Plaintiffs assert that Defendants fraudulently misrepresented and/or concealed any matter, plaintiffs have failed to allege this fraud with the particularity required by Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 9(b).
- 16. NFC reserves the right to assert any additional affirmative defenses raised by other defendants or that may hereafter be suggested by discovery in this case.

WHEREFORE, having fully answered the allegations of the Kraft Foods First Amended Complaint, National Food Corporation prays for judgment dismissing the same with prejudice

and with costs, and that it have such other, further, or different relief as may appear just in the premises.

Dated: April 26, 2012,

Respectfully submitted,
DAVIS WRIGHT TREMAINE LLP

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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that I electronically filed the foregoing with the Clerk of the Court using the CM/ECF system which will send notification of such filing to the following:

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I also caused the foregoing document to be served on all attorneys on the Panel Attorney

Service List via email. A copy of the Panel Attorney Service List is attached to this Certificate of

Service.

I certify under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Executed at Seattle, Washington this 26th day of April, 2012.

s/Marvin L. Gray, Jr.

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